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LITTLE BROTHERS OF THE BIG LABOR FAKERS

By WM. Z. FOSTER

*(Report of a speech against the Conference for
Progressive Labor Action, made in New Star
Casino, New York City on May 10, 1931)*

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What Is the T. U. U. L.?

THE Trade Union Unity League is the American Section of the Red International of Labor Unions. It is composed of industrial unions, organized minorities in the reformist organizations and unemployed councils. It organizes the whole body of workers, but bases itself primarily on the lowest paid and most exploited sections of the working class. It organizes the unemployed and unites them in joint struggle with the employed workers. It makes special efforts to organize Negro, youth and women workers.

The T. U. U. L. is based on the class struggle. It opposes the whole class collaboration line of the American Federation of Labor, including union-management-cooperation, arbitration, the no-strike policy, support of the capitalist parties, etc.

The T. U. U. L. fights to wring every possible concession from the capitalists. Briefly, the T. U. U. L. program of immediate demands comprises a militant struggle against wage cuts, against the speed-up, for unemployment insurance, for the rights of Negro, youth, women and foreign-born workers, for the release of political prisoners, against the war danger, and for the defense of the Soviet Union.

The T. U. U. L. is a revolutionary union; it fights for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' and farmers' government. On its fight for partial demands, the T. U. U. L. bases its program of organization, education, and struggle of the workers for final emancipation.

To broaden and intensify its general struggle, the T. U. U. L. makes united front movements with the Communist Party, with the workers in A. F. of L. unions and other proletarian organizations, and with unorganized workers.

The A. F. of L.—Organized Strike-breaking

The T. U. U. L. fights relentlessly against the A. F. of L. bureaucrats as the strike-breaking agents of American imperialism. The T. U. U. L. organizes the workers to take the leadership into their own hands, against the A. F. of L. misleaders, in the struggles both inside and outside the old unions.

The A. F. of L. cannot serve the trade union organizer and leader of the working class. This has been proved by its history of 50 years of labor betrayal. It is proved afresh by its present policy of union-management-cooperation, which turns its unions into adjuncts of the capitalist speed-up machinery. The A. F. of L. is an employers' tool in the wage-cutting campaign, the so-called Hoover no wage-cut agreement being only a smoke-screen behind which wholesale wage cuts are taking place. The A. F. of L. is the employers' mainstay in the fight against unemployment insurance. The A. F. of L. leaders are jingo militarists and the most aggressive organizers of the attack against the Soviet Union. The A. F. of L. Jim-Crows the Negro workers, cooperates with the Government to deport foreign-born workers, and to keep militants, such as Tom Mooney, in jail. The A. F. of L. political policy is an outright surrender to capitalist parties. The whole program of the A. F. of L. is designed to break the resistance of the workers and

to enable the capitalists to put across their program of war and intensified exploitation of the workers.

The A. F. of L. leaders are fascists; they are open defenders of capitalism. There is no real difference between Hamilton Fish and Matthew Woll. The A. F. of L. leaders are an organized gang of labor crooks and racketeers—racketeering was born in the A. F. of L. Woll, Green, Hillman and Co. are modern Farleys—strike-breakers for the capitalist class. At all costs, the workers must prevent these corrupt and hostile elements from exercising leadership in the class struggle.

Independent Unions Necessary

The T. U. U. L. policy of building independent industrial unions is inevitable. Previously the old T. U. E. L. had been strongly opposed to the formation of separate unions. But this policy has been forced upon the organization inexorably by the whole course of the class struggle.

When unorganized workers undertake to organize and fight, they cannot use the A. F. of L. The A. F. of L., consisting only of about 2,500,000 workers out of 25,000,000, and these mostly skilled workers—has shown throughout its history that it will not and cannot organize the unorganized. This was emphasized afresh by the failure of the 1926 steel campaign, by the ridiculous automobile campaign of a couple of years ago, and by the recent criminal debacle in the South. For unorganized workers the question of organization irresistibly raises the policy of building independent unions, such as the T. U. U. L. advocates.

Likewise in the A. F. of L. unions themselves, the determination of the workers to struggle leads surely to the formation of independent unions. The A. F. of L. leaders refuse to fight the bosses and they also resist bitterly all attempts to use the unions as instruments of real struggle. The control of the unions cannot be captured from these leaders by the workers through democratic means. Trade union democracy is almost completely

suppressed in the A. F. of L. The reactionary leaders control the unions by gangsterism, the blacklist, and by police and Tammany methods. For example, at the recent Philadelphia convention of the I. L. G. W. U., although the left wing represented 70% of the membership, it had only 40% of the convention delegation, owing to the undemocratic system of representation and the packing of the convention by the right wing leaders. Likewise, in the United Mine Workers, during the elections a few years ago, John L. Lewis, its President, brazenly stole 100,000 votes in order to defeat the left wing. Such suppressions are typical of the general situation in the old unions.

The A. F. of L. leaders will split the unions rather than let the workers capture and use them for fighting purposes. This was clearly exemplified when Sigman, of the I. L. G. W. U., expelled 30,000 cloakmakers. It was shown again when the leaders of the Furriers' Union, with the direct support of the A. F. of L. top leaders, also expelled 10,000 workers. And Lewis literally strangled the U. M. W. A. rather than let it pass into the control of the workers. It was out of such situations that the independent revolutionary unions of the T. U. U. L. were literally forced into existence as separate organizations.

The T. U. U. L. works inside the old unions. It is the organizer of the discontented masses in the A. F. of L. unions, now rising against their misleaders and the bosses. It puts no trust in the A. F. of L. leaders and carries out a policy of independent leadership by the militant workers themselves. But the T. U. U. L. clearly recognizes and understands that the inevitable tendency of the struggle in the A. F. of L. unions, for reasons stated, leads in the direction of the formation of new unions.

Growing Need for the T. U. U. L.

The whole situation in industry and among the workers makes the T. U. U. L. increasingly necessary. With the constant sharpening of the capitalist crisis and worsening of the condi-

tions of the working class, there goes a rapid radicalization of the masses. Likewise, more and more the A. F. of L. becomes an open strike-breaking machine, and more and more the workers are impelled to apply the class struggle policy of the T. U. U. L. The unorganized are forced to build new unions, in order to fight. And the organized workers also, when they try to put a fighting policy into effect, are driven into splits and have to form new unions. The T. U. U. L. is the logical product of the class struggle, and it must grow.

Although less than two years old, the T. U. U. L. has already conducted many important struggles—in Gastonia, Lawrence, Imperial Valley, the New York needle trades, etc. It has become an important factor in the fight against wage cuts and speed-up. In the struggle for unemployment insurance and immediate unemployment relief, the T. U. U. L. has played a big part all over the United States. While the A. F. of L. and the S. P. sabotaged and betrayed the struggle of the unemployed, the T. U. U. L. militantly carried forward the fight in the face of terrific police brutality. Undoubtedly, its gigantic mass demonstrations, hunger marches, fights against evictions, etc., more than anything else, have compelled the employers to recognize the unemployment situation, and to grant such niggardly relief as has been put into effect.

The T. U. U. L. has had to function in the face of terrific resistance and attacks from the Government, the capitalists and the A. F. of L. and insidious attacks from the Socialist Party and the Muscietes. It has faced wholesale arrests and jailing of militant workers and the most flagrant strike-breaking activities of the A. F. of L. and S. P. leadership. Nevertheless, the T. U. U. L. has been able to create a wide ideological following among the masses. But its weakness is that it has not known how yet to crystallize this following correspondingly into definite organization. Besides the ferocious opposition the T. U. U. L. has encountered, an important factor in preventing its growth

has been many errors in the course of the work, it being not a simple process to develop the technique of building revolutionary unions in the face of militant American imperialism. The T. U. U. L., by its policy of self criticism, fights ruthlessly to eliminate these wrong tendencies, even though enemies of the movement, such as the Musteites, in characteristic fashion, try to make use of this self-criticism to attack the T. U. U. L. The T. U. U. L. is the trade union leader of the workers, and it is proving this in the struggle.

The C. P. L. A.

The so-called progressives of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, of which A. J. Muste is the head, disagree with the whole foregoing T. U. U. L. analysis and program. Their proposals, boiled down, are, 1—that the T. U. U. L. policy of class struggle is wrong and must be supplanted by class collaboration. 2—That the A. F. of L. can be used as a base for organization of struggle of the working class. 3—That the T. U. U. L. should be liquidated.

The C. P. L. A. comes forward with a whole program of measures to revive the A. F. of L. unions. Among these are industrial unionism, amalgamation, labor party, organization of the unorganized, etc. But the substance of all this, as we shall see, is merely the acceptance of the reactionary line of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy under the cover of a smoke-screen of "left" phrases. The heart of Musteism is radical talk and reactionary action.

The C. P. L. A. is the Socialist Party forces in the trade unions. Extreme right socialists, such as Thomas and Maurer, occupy leading positions in the C. P. L. A., but the dominating elements are the so-called "left" Stanley group of the S. P. Affiliated to the top group of the C. P. L. A. also are remnants of former Labor Party leaders, miscellaneous trade union bureaucrats, liberals and Brookwood intellectuals, dilettante churchmen,

social workers, etc. And to give the group a red tinge, there are renegade Communists of the Lore, Lovestone, Cannon and Weisbord tendencies.

Radical Phrases—Reactionary Action

The Muste pseudo-left tendency is world-wide. It is to be found in many countries. It is the product of the growing world crisis of capitalism. As the workers become radicalized such elements see the danger of these masses passing to the control of the revolutionary unions and the Communist Party. Hence, without changing their basic reactionary line, they reddened their propaganda in order to retain a hold on the workers. They burst forward with radical demagoguery and pretended opposition to the right wing. But in spite of all this, they nevertheless go along with the right-wing policy in all its essentials. Of such a character are the Maxton-Cook group in the unions and Labor Party of Great Britain, the "left" social democrats in Germany, etc.

These fake left groups are in reality only specialized auxiliaries of the right-wing bureaucracy. Their role is, with radical phrases, to prevent the discontented masses from breaking away from the control and organization of the right wing. They create illusions among the masses that, after all, there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the reactionary unions and the Socialist Party, except that they need a certain fixing up, which these fake "lefts" propose to bring about. Thus they tend to tie the workers to these reactionary bodies. Such phrase-mongers are most insidious enemies of the workers. They paralyze the fight at every step. They represent a serious barrier to the growth of the revolutionary unions and to the development of the workers' struggle in general.

The deepening crisis is especially a period of such "left" maneuvers. Even the right trade-union bureaucracy itself takes a hand with "left" phrases, at the present time, to cover up its reactionary line. Thus the "radical" proposal of many bureau-

crats for the six-hour workday is simply Hoover's stagger plan dressed in labor phrases. Green's talk of resistance to wage cuts, is also pure bluff; and likewise his fake hints of a possible revolution "if something is not done about unemployment." Such pseudo radicalism is simply to delude the workers and by no means indicates a more militant policy on the part of these fakers. In Europe, the reactionary bureaucracy makes a similar "radical" stagger-plan propaganda for the five-day week slogan. They also conduct a sham battle against wage cuts—while at the same time they are putting these wage cuts into effect by means of their arbitration boards. Everywhere also, even the most pronounced fascists are characterized by such "left" demagoguery to fool the masses. They know that the masses are discontented and they try to organize this discontent into attacks against the workers themselves by covering up their capitalist programs with pretenses of radicalism. Such "left" maneuvers are characteristic of the crisis situation and must be ruthlessly exposed and combated.

Muste's Pseudo-Radicalism

Muste now makes such a "left" maneuver in the United States. Long a typical open opportunist, he is now suddenly putting on a bright red dress for the occasion of the crisis. His C. P. L. A. sees that the workers are deeply discontented, that both the organized and unorganized workers are seeking the means to struggle. They also see the growing influence of the revolutionary unions and the Communist Party, and the tendency of these organizations to secure mass leadership. Hence, the Musteites come forward with their phrase-mongering program to draw the rebellious workers into the control of the A. F. of L. and the S. P., with whose basic policies the so-called progressives are in agreement. Their program is to revive and revitalize these reactionary organizations and to make militant war against the revolutionary unions.

For this general purpose, the Musteites have become so "rad-

cal" of late that they talk of forming dual unions, and a new Socialist Party. They even speak of the "possible necessity" for violence in the class struggle, and begin to chatter vaguely about the eventual possibility of a proletarian dictatorship.

But all this radical talk boils down to tamely following the basic reactionary policies of the A. F. of L. and the S. P., as we shall see. The general effects of Musteism are to paralyze the struggles of the workers, to betray them to the A. F. of L. and Socialist Party reactionaries, to hinder the progress of the revolutionary unions of the T. U. U. L. The Musteites are emergency aids to the discredited strike-breaking trade union bureaucracy.

A Record of Betrayal

This is not the first experience of the workers with the growth of such fake "left" movements as the C. P. L. A. In past crises similar movements have also played a role in which they fully exposed their reactionary character. In the great revolutionary upheavals in Europe following the war there was a big development of such "left" movements. They even split from the Second International and formed a new organization, the so-called 2½ International. These elements, with their radical phrases and reactionary action, sabotaged every revolutionary struggle of the period. Then, when the workers had been defeated, they openly showed their reactionary colors by merging their international with the old Second International of the ultra-yellow socialists. They went back where they belonged—to organizational unity with the extreme rights. During the period of the British general strike, there was also a marked development along the same line. The Purcell-Hicks-Cook group of the trade union leaders became very radical in words. They even made a united front with the Russian unions against the Amsterdam International, but when the general strike came, they were just as active in its betrayal as the ultra-right leaders—Thomas, Clynes, MacDonald, etc. And after the wrecking of

the strike, they merged themselves completely with the rights. In short, "they headed the general strike movement in order to behead it." These "lefts" were never more than a section of the right trade union bureaucracy with the special task of fooling and demoralizing the masses with their radical phrases.

In the United States, during this same general period after the war, there was a similar growth of "left" tendencies. The so-called progressives, exemplified by John Fitzpatrick, became quite "radical." Nockles of the Chicago Federation of Labor, for example, denounced the Communists as conservatives and pronounced himself a real red. Hillman, president of the A. C. W., even aspired to R. I. L. U. leadership in the United States. Others took a similar "left" stand. This was not because these elements had suddenly become revolutionary, but because under the pressure of the militant masses, it was necessary for them to make a pretense of radicalism in order to retain their mass control.

But after the crisis had liquidated itself into the Coolidge prosperity period, these "progressives" swiftly lost their shallow radical hue. Fitzpatrick and Nockles surrendered openly to Gompers. Hillman and the "progressives" generally, became the very leaders in advocating the B & O plan—labor banking,—expulsion of left wingers—and the whole orientation of the reactionary labor leaders towards intensified collaboration with the employers.

Now, in the midst of the present crisis, Muste and his fellow leaders of the C. P. L. A. propose to make a similar "left" maneuver. These open opportunists are coming forward with a new fake radicalism. But this time it will not be so easy to fool the workers. The workers have learned from the earlier experiences, above related, and they will not so easily walk into the trap of the "left" phrase-mongers.

Muste—Advocate of Capitalist Planned Economy

Now let us take a look at Musteism in real life. When this is done, it is at once evident that despite all his radical talk, the basic line of policy of Muste is the same as that of the reactionary A. F. of L. The same general criticisms that apply to the A. F. of L. also apply to the Musteites. The Muste group is the cutting edge of the strike-breaking A. F. of L. bureaucracy in its fight against the revolutionary unions.

First, let us look for a moment at Muste's "revolutionary" theory. He speaks vaguely of "socialism" and "planned economy with worker control." He even hints in a round about way at the bare possibility of a necessity for the proletarian dictatorship. In passing, it is important to note the fact that when such an open opportunist as Muste comes forward with these pretenses at revolution, it is an indication of the rapid radicalization of the workers and the extremes of phrase-mongering to which the opportunists are driven in order to exert real influence upon the masses.

But let us see what Mr. Muste really means by "planned economy." In *Labor's Share of the Late Lamented Prosperity*, published by the C. P. L. A., he says:

"From now on more must be done in the way of social planning, of social control, if we are to make the best of possibilities. Indeed, some of the leading forces of business and some of the best brains of the economists have already begun the endeavor to learn how to build a controlled economy. Labor should not lag in this effort. Its power, its point of view, and its intelligence, will be necessary for the success of any such program. If the labor movement does not recognize this modern trend for economic control, and participate in it, the labor movement will become a mere backwater in the stream of history."

This statement is the rankest of capitalist economics. It exposes the thin veneer of Muste's pretenses of socialism. Hillquit, the typical social fascist, will agree with it, and so, also, will Norman Thomas. More than that, Matthew Woll, Hamilton Fish and Herbert Hoover will also heartily subscribe to such a

conception. Similar advocacy of capitalist planned economy can be read any time in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Muste's theory that capitalism can overcome its crisis by planned production is exactly what the capitalists themselves are saying and hoping for. And it is typical of such social fascists as Muste that, despite their radical pretenses, they are the very leaders in this counter-revolutionary attempt to bolster up the decaying capitalist system by developing "planned economy."

The T. U. U. L. repudiates such capitalist poison as Muste spreads about a systematic and organized capitalist production. Such conceptions sow illusions among the workers about capitalist "prosperity" and destroys their militancy. The T. U. U. L. denies that capitalism can establish such social planning. Capitalism is inherently competitive and anarchistic in production. Only a Workers' State, such as the Soviet Government, can carry on planned production. "Planned capitalist economy" is a plan against the workers. The T. U. U. L. denies that the capitalists can overcome their contradictions and crisis, as Muste's theory implies. On the contrary, these contradictions and the general crisis of capitalism, must become sharper, deeper, more explosive. Only the proletarian revolution can finally solve these contradictions and liquidate the capitalist crisis by the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the Workers' and Farmers' Government.

In the face of Muste's program for curing capitalism's ills on the basis of planned production, his confused talk about the proletarian dictatorship is worse than ridiculous. It is merely put forward to deceive the workers. His whole conception is flatly contradictory to the Marxian-Leninist theory and program of proletarian revolution.

Muste—Supporter of the B & O Plan

The heart of the A. F. of L. class collaboration policy is union-management-cooperation, or the B & O Plan. This is the bosses'

policy for speeding the workers, for cutting their wages, for destroying militant organization and struggle amongst them, and anyone who advocates it is directly doing the employers' service. Now let us see how the Musteite policy is the same as that of the A. F. of L. in this vital matter. From Muste's own mouth it is clear that he supports the B & O Plan not only in practice, but also in theory. It is characteristic of the demagoguery of fake lefts such as Muste that they talk about the dictatorship of the proletariat, the class struggle, the B & O Plan, and capitalist planned economy all in one breath.

In his pamphlet *Peace or Pep*, Muste says:

"I am not one of those who have been violently and indiscriminately critical of union-management-cooperation, the B & O Plan. In some of its features, it is an inevitable and justifiable extension of collective bargaining."

And again in his pamphlet, *The Kind of Unionism*, he says:

"For the union to assume responsibility for production efficiency, elimination of waste, and so on, is not, I submit, a fundamentally new departure either in a conservative or a radical direction. It is just our old friend, Collective Bargaining. There is no use kicking against it, kicking about it in bull-headed fashion."

Mr. Woll and Mr. Green have no quarrel with such a statement. The employers will also find it quite satisfactory. It exposes the basic line of Muste to be identical with that of the A. F. of L. leadership. It means in practice to subordinate the trade unions to the employers, and to reduce them to mere adjuncts of the capitalist machinery.

Muste's B & O Plan endorsement is not some peculiarity of his own, as different from other social fascists. It is entirely in line with the policy of the Socialist Party and reactionary trade unions in this country and all over the world. For example, the British trade unions and the Labor Party endorsed Mondism and the League of Nations' rationalization program worked out by

the employers, the first provision of which is "to secure the maximum efficiency of labor with the minimum of effort." Similarly, the German trade unions, four years ago, declared, "In full agreement with the memorandum of the German industrialists, we consider that rationalization is the most important condition for the well-being of the nation."

Such class collaboration as embodied in union-management-cooperation destroys the militancy of the workers. It is a surrender of their fight to the employers. It reduces Muste, like the A. F. of L. leaders, to speed-up agents of the bosses. The T. U. U. L. repudiates Muste's whole B & O Plan conception. The T. U. U. L. unions, while they may enter into agreements with employers over wages and working conditions, assume no responsibility whatever for production. Their fight is to improve the conditions of the workers, not to speed-up production. The responsibility for production will devolve upon the workers only after the social revolution.

The Musteites—Little Brothers of the Big Trade Union Bureaucrats

The Musteites, agreeing with the A. F. of L. heads regarding class collaboration, consequently have no real fight against these leaders. Such quarrels as they carry on with them in their journals are purely on the surface and for display purposes only. Instead of considering the A. F. of L. leaders, as Lenin said they were, as agents of the bourgeoisie, and as the T. U. U. L. treats them in practice, with relentless opposition, the Musteite attitude towards these misleaders is that they are erring or misguided brothers who need only a certain amount of correction to show them the wrongness of their way. The substance of Muste's program is to educate them or coax them in one way or another, into "action."

For example, when the Southern organizing campaign was instituted by the A. F. of L., Muste greeted this manifestly fake

campaign "with glee," and when the workers in the South had been shamefully betrayed, Muste simply said that "it suggested another grave shortcoming in the A. F. of L. organization strategy." Similarly, when the A. F. of L. went militantly ahead with its boss-inspired fight against unemployment insurance, Muste was moved to consider this only "an amazing inconsistency on the part of the A. F. of L." The fake auto campaign of the A. F. of L. left him only "bitterly disappointed."

But the fight against unemployment insurance by the A. F. of L. is no inconsistency, nor was the betrayal of the Southern workers a grave shortcoming of the A. F. of L. organization strategy. Both constitute direct treachery to the workers, carried out at the instigation of the A. F. of L. leaders' masters in Wall Street. The same is to be said of the still-born auto organizing campaign and various similar projects of the A. F. of L.

Characteristically, Mr. Muste, who fails to see the A. F. of L. bureaucrats as real enemies of the workers, proposes that "there be a measure of toleration and decency shown in the fight against the A. F. of L. leaders." And experience shows that Muste tolerates them very successfully. This is because he and his group are essentially a section of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, in spite of their radical phrases. For example, recently in the New York pocket-book makers union, Shipiacoff, social fascist leader of the union, accused his colleagues of furnishing information to the bosses, and the Finance Committee (also social fascists) charged mishandling of \$265,000. A committee composed of the bureaucrats Zaritsky, Salutsky, Hendin, Dubinsky and Muste was appointed to investigate this glaring scandal. But this committee brought in a report—also signed by Muste—brought in a report white-washing the whole crooked gang. So far as the T. U. U. L. is concerned, it neither tolerates these bureaucrats, nor treats them decently; it is out to politically exterminate them and nothing short of that.

Muste says that his program is to force the A. F. of L. leaders

to fight. This is also a delusion and a snare. No one can make these misleaders fight in defense of the workers' interests. All that can be done is to make them put forward a few phrases so that they can stand at the head of the militant movement of the workers, and thus be enabled to betray them in the struggle. Mr. Muste's program of forcing the A. F. of L. leaders to "fight" is only another means of keeping them in positions where they can betray the workers.

Muste also declares that "in a strike one shuts his mouth and bides his time." This simply means to surrender the struggle of the workers to the control of their reactionary leaders in its most acute periods, just when there is the greatest danger of betrayal.

The Muste group further clearly exposes its character as a section of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy by openly affiliating with these bureaucrats wherever and whenever they make even the flimsiest pretenses of "progressivism." Thus when the fascist Broach was elected head of the Electrical Workers Union, Muste called upon him as a "progressive" to "put on his armor and with sword in hand, go out and fight the dragon of open shoppery." The quality of this fascist's "progressivism" may be judged from the fact that in the *Electrical Workers Journal* of August, 1930, he typically declared that "any fool who 'leaves it to the members to decide' is not fit to represent a labor union." And again in the Illinois mine situation, when the proven labor crooks, Fishwick, Farrington and Walker, organized a fake new miners' union with Howatt, Muste enthusiastically praised John J. Walker (*Labor Age*, Oct., 1930) as "strong man because of his position in the Illinois Federation of Labor." Muste mildly criticized Farrington of noisome reputation among the miners, but he hastily took all the sting out of his criticism by saying that after all "selling out to the operators is not so serious with the miners." Muste's theory here is that the miners have

been sold out so often that they now take it as a matter of course on the part of their leaders.

The Muste-A. F. L. Betrayal in the South

Now let us see how the "left" Muste puts his combined policy of capitalist social planning—B & O Plan—united front with the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, etc., into practice. For this we need only to take the recent so-called organizing campaign of the A. F. of L. in the South. The Southern workers, intolerably oppressed, were in a state of mass revolt, such as this country has seldom seen. Their upheaval was of vast importance. The role of the A. F. of L. is to liquidate such upheavals for the capitalists. That is why they are supported by the big employers and the United States government. Hence the A. F. of L. got busy at once to smash the growing movement in the South and in this they had the active support of the C. P. L. A.

The A. F. of L. launched its campaign with the usual bombast. According to a report in a Memphis paper (quoted in *Labor and Textiles*), here is how Green undertook the job:

"William Green, president of the A. F. of L., might be taken for the president of a bank, the president of a railroad, a United States Senator, or a good corporation lawyer. . . . The policies he advocated might have come with propriety from the president of the American Bankers' Association."

In addition, Mr. MacMahon, president of the United Textile Workers, and a warm friend of Mr. Muste, further elaborated the A. F. of L. policy in the South as follows:

"We aren't talking higher wages, we aren't talking shorter hours, you cannot express our objectives in those terms."

As further A. F. of L. preparations to "organize the South," Mr. Jeffrey Browne, efficiency engineer, went along with Green and MacMahon and held conferences with the employers everywhere to convince them that they could better speed up and exploit their workers with the help of the A. F. of L., and prevent the growth of the revolutionary unions in the South.

Then, to complete the line up, the other wing of the A. F. of L. machinery, the Muste group, got into action. Mr. Muste became all enthusiastic about the southern campaign and hailed it as very important. He painted this treacherous manoeuvre of the A. F. of L. as a real effort to organize the southern workers. He even demanded that the fakers in charge be given \$1,000,000 by the workers to do their "work." Moreover, the C. P. L. A. sent its organizers to "help the good work" along. These organizers talked radical to the workers in the mills, while Green, MacMahon and Co. were selling them out in the Chambers of Commerce. And then, once the workers took the initiative themselves and developed strikes, Organizer Hoffman, a Brookwood College graduate and a notable progressive, who brought into the South the employers' agent who broke the Passaic strike, worked hand in glove with him and the government arbitrators and most reactionary A. F. of L. fakers in selling out these workers by means of the notorious gentlemen's (?) agreement in Marion and Elizabethtown. The U. T. W. leaders, with whom the Muste organizers actively cooperated, used the same methods in wrecking the heroic strike in Danville. Naturally, the whole movement in the South has resulted in a shameful debacle, disastrous for the workers.

To save his "progressive" reputation, Muste now comes forward denying all responsibility for the criminal betrayal, saying the C. P. L. A. policies were not followed. But this will not avail. How the Musteites "protested" against the A. F. of L. policy in the South is exemplified by the following statement of Tom Tippet, a Musteite leader, in his recent book, *When Southern Labor Stirs*, page 179:

"Mr. Green was well received in the South—bankers and politicians, manufacturers and teachers, attended his meetings. Mr. Green addressed himself to the upper classes and the whole setting of his meetings was adapted to these elements. The president of the A. F. of L. did not talk at the mill gates, *this was good strategy on his part.*" (Emphasis mine—W. Z. F.)

The Muste group were active participants in the sell-out of the Southern workers by the A. F. of L. The Musteites were the catspaw of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, a "radical" figleaf for Green to hide his reactionary nakedness. In the South, the Musteites clearly exposed their role as auxiliaries of the strike-breaking A. F. of L. bureaucracy, as an essential part of the bosses' machinery to beat back the workers and to prevent the organization of the revolutionary unions.

Musteites Betrayal in the Needle Trades

The needle trades of New York give objective example of how the Musteites actually operate in the class struggle as objective agents of the bosses and the A. F. of L. leadership.

The social fascist unions of the needle trades follow basic policies identical with those of other A. F. of L. unions. They apply union-management-cooperation with its inevitable wage cuts, speed-up, efficiency engineers in the unions, etc. They are craft unions; they are controlled by gangsters, trade union democracy being at zero in them. They check off dues in agreement with the bosses. They pay typical A. F. of L. extravagant salaries to officials. They are saturated with graft, etc. The only difference between these and ordinary A. F. of L. unions is that they make efforts to cover up their reactionary policies with radical phrases about socialism, the Labor Party, etc. They are compelled to use these phrases because they have to deal with more radical workers. Muste swallows whole this noisome mess, giving the needle trades unions his unqualified endorsement.

A few years ago conditions became so intolerable in the needle trades that there developed a mass revolt under the leadership of the old T. U. E. L. The "socialist" needle trades unions had become tools of the bosses and of Tammany Hall. The majority of the needle workers in New York, totalling at least 60,000, went into open struggle against the bosses and the so-

cialist union leaders; but, under the personal direction of Green and Woll, who worked hand in glove with the Socialist Party, this movement, including several strikes, was broken and the unions shattered. Mr. Muste did nothing but applaud the whole reactionary attack of the combined A. F. of L. and Socialist Party leaders upon the workers.

Then these leaders began to rebuild the shattered unions. The methods they used were exemplified in the recent cloak and dress strikes in New York. These strikes, in reality lock-outs to enforce the old unions upon the workers, were openly initiated by the bosses and carried through by a most brazen united front of employers, capitalist newspapers, politicians, the S. P., the A. F. of L., police, gangsters, etc. The workers were literally herded back into the old unions by this fascist aggregation on pain of losing their jobs and otherwise facing the capitalist terror. The T. U. U. L. revolutionary needle trades union had to wage a life and death struggle against this fascist and insidious combination.

And what did the "left" Mr. Muste do about all this? Even as he had endorsed the breaking of the left wing control in the needle unions previously, so he applauded the fake cloak and dress strikes as great victories. In this he was joined by Mr. Green, who devoted a whole issue of the *American Federationist* to expound what a great victory had been won over the revolutionary workers. The rebuilding of the I. L. G. W. U. Mr. Muste hailed as one of the splendid recent achievements of the American labor movement. The betrayal of the workers by the A. F. of L. and the S. P. in the needle trades is one of the most shameful pages in American labor history and upon this page, the Muste "progressive" group has written its reactionary record in the clearest terms.

Muste—Enemy of Independent Unionism

Muste's C. P. L. A. now talks glibly of forming new unions wherever the reactionary unions are unwilling or incapable of

leading the masses. But this is only a pretense like the rest of Muste's "radicalism." Wherever the Muste group take the initiative in forming new unions, it is merely to prevent the growth of the revolutionary unions. They will always be ready to turn their independent organizations back to the A. F. of L. when the occasion offer. The Muste C.P.L.A.'ites are bitter enemies of all revolutionary unionism. Their whole policy in the mining, needle and textile industries is designed to smash the revolutionary unions. For example, in the Illinois mining fields, when the A. F. of L. fakers could not longer hold the revolting miners from the control of the National Miners Union, Muste launched his fake dual union with the Fishwick, Farrington and Walker-Peabody Coal Co. agents, at its head, their weakling tool, Howat, in the middle, and the Trotskyites at the tail.

Muste, an enemy of the T. U. U. L., even tries to quote Lenin against the formation of independent revolutionary unions. But this is a monstrous misrepresentation of Lenin's position. The fact is that Lenin, while correctly stressing the necessity for working inside the conservative trade unions, also clearly understood the need for forming revolutionary trade unions where the old organizations did not offer this basis for working-class struggle. This is exemplified by his support of the formation of the independent revolutionary union movement in France and Czechoslovakia.

The Musteites are as consciously enemies of the T.U.U.L. unions as the A. F. of L. bureaucrats are. This enmity Mr. Muste boasts of. In the *Federated News Letter* of February 3, 1929, in presenting himself to the A. F. of L. bureaucracy as a loyal opposition, he declared: "We are as unwilling to cooperate with the Communists as is the A. F. of L. itself." This statement puts Muste side by side with Woll and Green.

But Muste has no difficulty, however, in cooperating with Communist renegades. He goes along, cheek by jowl, with the Salutsksys, Tippetts, Lores, Lovestones, Weisbords, Gitlows,

Watts, and Angelos, expelled from the Communist Party. This is because their line for liquidation of the T.U.U.L., for trade union legalism, for united fronts with A. F. of L. fakers, etc., is basically the same as his.

These elements follow more and more the essential Muste line and form a united front with Muste against the T.U.U.L. In the needle trades, the Lovestoneite, Zimmerman, openly demands the liquidation of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, and surrender to the I.L.G.W.U. In the Illinois mining fields, the Trotskyites supported the formation of the Howat union against the National Miners Union, while the Lovestoneites stood for all hands retreating back to the rotten U. M. W. A. In the textile industry Gitlow of the Lovestone group, has just made a united front with the U. T. W. leaders to fight against the efforts of the T.U.U.L. textile union, which now has five of its Paterson leaders facing execution, to organize the Paterson silk workers. For this campaign the American Fund for Public Service has voted him \$3,000.

Muste's "Fight" Against Unemployment and Wage Cuts

The Muste C. P. L. A. while tipping its hat to the proposition of unemployment insurance, makes no real fight for it. The Muste group has a typically capitalist outlook on the question of unemployment, even as the A. F. of L. It sees unemployment more or less as a passing phenomenon. Thus in the pamphlet, *Labor's Share in the Late Lamented Prosperity*, it is said:

"It would be foolish to assert that the introduction of machinery would mean that fewer men would have jobs ten years hence than now are at work. Better methods help create jobs in the long run. But that does not mean that there is not a serious problem for the workers who now lose their jobs and do not find new ones for several months."

This is capitalist rot, such as can be read any day in the capitalist papers. Even the A. F. of L. would make a more intel-

ligent statement of the problems of unemployment. The T. U. L. repudiates such a capitalist proposition. With the introduction of new speed-up methods and with the shrinkage of the world markets, a huge and permanent unemployed army is being developed in all the capitalist countries. This grows ever worse. To reduce it simply to a temporary condition is to ignore the whole problem. Not only is unemployment not a temporary phenomenon but capitalism has no cure for it. The best that can be done for it under capitalism is to relieve the workers from the burden of starvation through systems of state insurance and immediate measures of relief. Only the proletarian revolution can finally solve the problem. The workers in the Soviet Union have shown the only way to wipe out unemployment.

The C. P. L. A. also makes no fight against the wage cutting drive of the bosses. Muste, as a true bourgeois economist, sees the resistance to these drives condemned in advance. His theory is that strikes cannot be successfully conducted during the crisis, a typical Menshevik conception. In the *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1921, commenting on the Hoover-A. F. of L. no wage-cutting agreement, Muste accepts the inevitability of wage cuts, by saying:

"The serious fact remains, however, that they made a bad bargain for labor, for many reasons. The promise of the employers, not to cut wages, cannot be enforced."

Logically following up this idea of the inevitability of wage cuts, the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, controlled by Muste elements, promptly accepted a general wage cut of 20 per cent for 16,000 workers without a strike. It was the first American national trade union to officially accept a general wage cut. Muste excuses this on the ground that the rest of the labor movement is too backward in development to give support for a real struggle against wage cuts. In Philadelphia, when the upholstery workers struck against a 14 per cent wage cut engineered by the U. T. W. officials, these of-

ficials, with the connivance of the Muste local leaders, expelled the local and organized a new union to take its place.

The T. U. U. L. rejects this whole Muste surrender in the face of the bosses' wage cut drive. It calls upon the workers to wage a militant struggle against such wage slashing. Its slogan is "Organize and Strike Against Wage Cuts" and this is the slogan that the masses of workers instinctively support when they face wage reductions.

Muste's Acceptance of Arbitration and Injunctions

The Muste movement, like the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, accepts arbitration in theory and practice. This is exemplified by the so-called "impartial machinery" in the needle trades unions, which Muste supports, and by the shameful arbitration betrayals by the Musteites among the Philadelphia textile workers. The T.U.U.L., on the contrary, fights against arbitration as a basic method of the employers to beat down the workers in the struggle.

The Musteites have also abandoned the fight against the injunction. They support the A. F. of L.-S. P. proposals, to accept injunctions provided preliminary hearings have been held in the courts. This policy legalizes the use of the injunction against the workers. The T. U. U. L., on the other hand, relentlessly fights the injunction and calls upon the workers to meet the issuance of all injunctions by mass violation upon the picket lines.

The C. P. L. A.'s Jim-Crowism

The C. P. L. A. supports the A. F. of L. Jim-Crow policy with regard to Negro workers. In the South, the U. T. W. followed a policy of organizing separate Negro locals and the Musteites winked at it. The attitude of Mr. MacMahon, Musteite ally, on the Negro question is exemplified by the fact that at a meeting in the South where a white chauvinist accused him of advocating social equality for Negroes, he indignantly denounced

the chauvinist as a liar and assured him that he made no such demand.

The attitude of the C. P. L. A. towards the Negro question is properly summarized by Mr. Heywood Brown, a socialist candidate supported by Muste in the recent elections. Brown said in the *New York Telegram* of April 28, 1930:

"If I were a candidate for high executive office, or judiciary office, I would say, even without being cornered, that I would not now sanction the efforts to enforce the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States."
(These amendments provide for citizenship rights of Negroes—W. Z. F.)

The Musteites avoid formulating demands for Negro rights. The clear-cut demands of the T.U.U.L. they denounce as "fine phrases" ("The Negro Worker", p. 14). With such a stand on the Negro question, the Muste "progressives" have no trouble to live in harmony with white chauvinist A. F. of L. leaders.

Against such shameful betrayal of the struggle of the Negro workers, the T. U. U. L. militantly fights. It demands full industrial, political and social equality for the Negroes, with the right of self determination in the Black Belt. Moreover, T. U. U. L. organizers and members fight for those demands in the most terror-ridden South. This is exemplified by the fight they are now making for the nine Negro boys the Southern capitalists are trying to legally lynch in Scottsboro, Alabama.

Muste's Pacifism

The Musteites, under cover of their "left" phrase demagoguery, are supporters of the capitalist war program. The capitalists have a double-phased war policy. This consists, on the one hand, of open military preparations for war, and on the other, of pacifist moves (disarmament conferences, peace pacts, etc.) to throw dust into the eyes of the masses and to blind them regarding the real war preparations that are going on. Both of these phases are propagated in the working class by the direct or

objective agents of American imperialism. Thus, Woll and Green advocate militarism openly, while Muste and Thomas advocate the pacifists lures which blind the masses to the true war danger.

The pacifism of Muste is graphically illustrated by the *Labor Age* analysis of the London Naval Conference. This journal, in March, 1930, says, the "London Naval Conference was Balked by Imperialist Design." But in reality this conference was not balked by imperialist designs, it was *organized* by imperialist designs. The London conference was not a conference called by some peace loving spirits and then spoiled by imperialist exploiters. It was simply a manoeuvre of these imperialists in their struggles against each other, and especially was it designed to create illusions among the masses that the capitalist governments are actually trying to prevent war. It was above all, a step in the organization of the projected capitalist war against the Soviet Union.

Muste's pacifism is in line with the social fascist pacifism and militarism the world over. The socialists in all countries (Germany, England, Poland, etc.,) find it quite possible in their demagogic way to advocate both phases of the capitalist war program; that is, while keeping up their pacifist chatter, they at the same time, vote for the war budgets in their respective governments and take the lead in militarizing the peoples. They are real organizers of the coming world war.

Muste and the Socialist Party

The C. P. L. A., lined up with the "left" wing of the Socialist Party, now talks glibly of the regeneration of the S. P. The Stanley group (Muste wing of the S. P.) wants the S. P. to adopt a more "radical" program—that is, to go in more for radical phrases in the approved Muste way. And they hint if this is not done they will form a new party. But such a party would be a hindrance to the workers. It would be only another

demagogic phrase-mongering aid to the A. F. of L. and S. P. policy.

The Muste movement is a tail of the Socialist Party. In the last election Muste openly supported the S.P. In the *New Leader*, Muste stated that he "would do all in my power to promote the campaign of the S. P. candidates this fall". Thus, the "left" Muste found himself in a united front with the capitalist papers and politicians, bourgeois intellectuals, etc., for Thomas, Brown, and Co., candidates whom these reactionary elements were consciously supporting as willing tools against the awakening workers.

The Muste group, with its "left" phrases, is a component part of the world wide counter-revolutionary Second International. The British Labor Government, with its wage cutting, dole cutting, and speed-up program, its imperialist Indian policy, etc., is a good example of how this institution is used for the maintenance of capitalism. The British Labor Government, like other Socialist Party governments, has not moved an inch toward socialism. They are trail blazers for fascism, demoralizers of the workers in the face of the growing employers' fascist offensive.

Let Muste enthuse for the International of MacDonald, Noske, Chiang Kai Shek, etc., but the revolutionary workers will support the International of Lenin, and the Russian Revolution, of the Party that is carrying out the Five Year Plan brilliantly.

Musteites—False Friends of the Soviet Union

Finally, the reactionary character of the left phrase-mongering Muste group is exposed by their attitude towards the Soviet Union. Muste boasts of his friendship towards the Soviet Union. But this friendship is only a gesture. Social fascists all over the world logically see in the Soviet Union the collapse and defeat of their reformist program of supporting capitalism under the pretense of gradually reforming it into socialism. Their

whole reformistic program is ridiculed and smashed by the workers' gigantic success at building Socialism in the Soviet Union. Their assurances of friendship towards the Soviet Union are false. They are dictated simply because the radical workers would repudiate an open stand on their part against the Soviet Union. But beneath this pretended friendship stands a definite and bitter hostility. The same fight that Woll makes openly against the Soviet Union, the social fascists make hypocritically the world over.

The social fascists are part of the war machinery against the Soviet Union. They are going along in the general attacks of the capitalist class against the proletarian revolution. Their special task is to destroy the prestige of the Soviet Government among the workers, thereby facilitating the capitalist offensive against the Soviet Union. Occasionally the social fascists, overlooking the necessity for their camouflage of friendship to the Soviet Union, express their real attitude towards the Russian workers' Government. Thus, Morris Hillquit, head of the Socialist Party, said in the *New Leader* of Feb. 4, 1928:

"The Soviet Government has been the greatest disaster and calamity that has ever occurred to the socialist movement. . . . Let us disassociate ourselves from the Soviet Government."

One of the most dangerous forms of the social fascists' enmity against the Soviet Union is to minimize the danger of the capitalist war attack. By such a policy the workers are disarmed, and led to think there is no danger, while in reality the capitalists are organizing feverishly for armed struggle against the Soviet Union. Muste characteristically adopts this social fascist line. He says, *Labor Age*, Feb., 1931:

"We think that the unemployment situation in the west will nullify any war intentions on the part of anti-Soviet nations. Fancy Britain with over 2,600,000 idle, and Germany, with still more; Italy with a large idle army to feed, and now even prosperous France, with all its gold, is beginning to feel its unemployment problem—yes, fancy these countries going to war."

Here is a complete denial of the war danger in general and of war against the Soviet Union in particular. The capitalist crisis, which is the basic cause of the war danger, Muste urges as the reason why war is impossible. But in reality, if the war against the Soviet Union is being delayed, it is not because the capitalists do not want war and are not skillfully organizing for it, but because they fear that in case they launch such a war, the workers, taking Lenin's advice, will turn it into a civil war, and put an end to capitalism. This is the disaster they are guarding against and this is why they use the social fascists to lull the workers into a false sense of security.

But the social fascists are doing more than paralyzing the workers' defense of the Soviet Union. They are also definitely organizing the capitalist offensive. This was shown clearly by the exposures in the recent trials of the "Industrial Party" in Moscow. They are ardent champions of Briand's Pan-Europe scheme, which is the bloc of European anti-Soviet nations. The following quotation from the *Vorwaerts* of Berlin, the leading Socialist Party paper, show how the social fascists are preparing the ground for war:

"Russian Soviet imperialism, which has robbed a whole series of non-Russian peoples of their rights and principles, is striving to extend its rule still further and to cause trouble between other countries. *This is the greatest danger of war.*" (Emphasis mine—W. Z. F.)

"There is no doubt that if the collapse of the Five Year Plan should happen, then revolutionary war can become the last card played by the Bolsheviks, and in face of this danger, the labor and socialist international must be just as vigilant as in the case of capitalist intervention."

"We have no confidence in the rulers in Moscow, and we cannot help feel that when they consider a revolutionary war to be necessary, they will employ the old tricks of all war mongers and represent themselves as the party that has been attacked."

Neither Matthew Woll nor Hamilton Fish has ever made more bitter and dangerous attacks than these against the Soviet Union. The social fascists, of whose organization Muste is a

part, are trying to make the slogan of the next capitalist war: the war to overthrow the Soviet Government. The Second International, in a recent resolution, practically calls upon the workers to be ready for such a war against the Soviet Union. The social fascists, the Muste group included, are the main social bulwark of the decaying capitalist system.

In Conclusion

Beneath its thin veneer of "radical" phrases, the C. P. L. A. in its activities shows that it has nothing to offer the workers, either to meet their present problems, or to prepare for their final emancipation. The C. P. L. A. is a tool of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats and the bosses, and plays this game. It is only a "left" maneuver of the A. F. of L. Towards such an organization, the workers' attitude must be one of militant attack. The T. U. U. L. fights the C. P. L. A. leaders in open struggle in the old unions and among the unorganized. But to the rank and file workers who may be deluded by Musteism, as well as towards A. F. of L. workers generally, the T. U. U. L. proposes a common action, on the basis of the united front from below, against the bosses and against all their agents in the working class masquerading under the colors of labor leaders.

The T. U. U. L. is indispensable for the carrying on of the economic struggle of the working class. Its program of class struggle is basic to unite the workers in effective combat against the capitalists. Its policy of building minorities in old unions, and of establishing independent unions, corresponds to the needs of the workers. Its revolutionary goal is fundamental; the workers, now facing the deepening capitalist crisis, and being inspired by the great Russian Revolution, are looking forward to a new social era. Every class conscious worker, every worker who wants to defend himself now and to organize for final emancipation, will support the Trade Union Unity League.